



Councilmember Bruce A. Harrell
Seattle City Council
Memorandum

Date: July 21, 2010

To: Peter Harris, Council Central Staff
Anne Levinson, Civilian Auditor, Office of Professional Accountability
Richard O'Neill, President, Seattle Police Officers Guild
Dick Reed, Assistant Chief, Seattle Police
Bill Schrier, Director, Department of Information Technology

From: Councilmember Bruce A. Harrell *BAH*

Subject: Body-mounted police cameras

The intent of this memorandum is to coordinate the many issues that may surface as we consider a technical trial or pilot program using on-person cameras for police. This outline has been submitted to the Mayor under the assumption that he remains interested and supportive of these efforts. Based on the July 7, 2010, brown-bag meeting to discuss this technology, it became apparent that a deployment of cameras raises issues that affect many departments so I thought it would be helpful to summarize the issues in one document.

1. At the brown-bag discussion it was suggested that 50% of the complaints against the Seattle Police Department could be reduced. This offered savings of \$8,245,107.00 over two years (combined complaints, litigation and settlements). While it may be debatable whether that projection of savings is accurate and whether that type of computation is reasonable, perhaps Peter Harris of our Central Staff could assist in further exploring this issue to determine whether any cost savings can be generated from this type of technology and what may be a reasonable approach or methodology to address the cost-savings issue. As we explore the potential savings that body-mounted cameras may yield, it is important that these numbers be independently substantiated and by this memorandum I would like Central Staff's assistance in this regard.
2. Assistant Police Chief Dick Reed indicated that the Seattle Police Department will be retiring or upgrading the existing camera equipment in the approximately 275 police cars that contain digital in-car video (DICV). The 2009 report of the civilian auditor indicated that DICV is a valuable tool and urged the department to outfit all marked patrol cars with DICV as quickly as possible. The question for Assistant Police Chief Dick Reed is whether he can better describe the current schedule for retiring or upgrading the existing DICV equipment, the projected costs, and what equipment options are being considered. Because one type of the body-mounted cameras can double as DICV, the question becomes whether it may make sense to use this as an opportunity to migrate some equipment to body-mounted equipment.
3. With respect to the auditor's report described above, I am hoping that Ms. Anne Levinson can continue monitoring this request from the previous civilian auditor to determine whether she agrees with these conclusions regarding whether DICV remains a valuable tool. If she

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does, then it is unclear to me how we measure or describe the success of DICV and perhaps the next audit report could contain information as to how we measure success relative to DICV deployment. While we do have the former auditor's conclusory statement that DICV is a valuable tool, the audit report does not address why such a conclusion is drawn and hopefully Ms. Levinson will be in a position during the next audit to flag this issue.

4. As indicated in the brown-bag discussions, in order for a potential pilot program to be successful, it would be ideal to have officers who are willing to test the equipment. While it may be argued that this equipment should be embraced by police officers because of its benefits, this effort should not be perceived as a mandatory condition of employment and we must recognize that this equipment creates a significant change in how officers conduct their day-to-day business. To that end, notwithstanding any potential labor issues that may be separately negotiated, I am hoping to have some open discussions with Richard O'Neill and Interim Chief Diaz regarding how a potential voluntary trial may take place; how many officers should be involved and what areas of town may make sense. Again, these discussions are separate from labor negotiations and will be more logistical in nature.
5. With respect to archiving and maintaining the data compiled from video camera equipment, Seattle, much like most other cities, has made a strategic decision to own and operate its servers and control the record keeping process. The issue directed at Bill Schrier and Assistant Chief Dick Reed, is to what extent we have excess capacity regarding our current capacity to store DICV and whether it makes sense to evaluate a cloud based archiving system with regard to on-person cameras. As we all know in the technology field, cloud based computing is becoming more accessible, many cities and corporations are migrating to this method and we may realize significant savings if this type of storage strategy is proven successful.

In sum, the intent here is to simply coordinate the technology policies that this effort presents and make sure all of us work together on this very significant endeavor.

Cc: Councilmember Sally Bagshaw
Councilmember Tim Burgess
Councilmember Sally Clark
Councilmember Richard Conlin
Councilmember Jean Godden
Councilmember Nick Licata
Councilmember Mike O'Brien
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen
Ben Noble, Central Staff
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